

### OCTOBER 2008 MEETING:

#### *Santa Margarita Low-Impact-Development Project*

#### TOPIC:

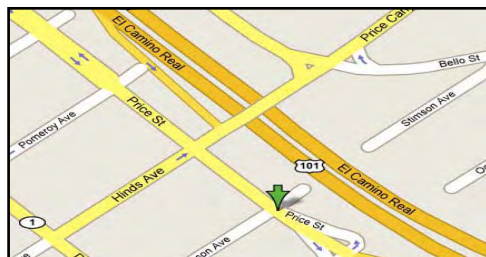
The San Luis Obispo County Flood Control and Water Conservation District (District) is near completion of the Santa Margarita Low-Impact-Development Project. This project is a demonstration in managing storm water in an environmentally sensitive manner. The District was awarded grant money from the State Water Resources Control Board to fund 75% of the work, with the remaining funds being provided by the District. The project actually comprises work in two geographically independent sites; however, both are linked by hydrology.

The first project is located on the Santa Margarita Ranch, southwest of the town of Santa Margarita, and will result in an enhanced wetland that will also attenuate peak storm flows to slow down storm water runoff into the urban area. The second project involves the construction of wet-swales, a type of bioswale, in the existing roadside ditches on Murphy Avenue and on two blocks of F Street.

Nola Engelskirger with the San Luis Obispo County Public Works Department will give a presentation on the design and construction of these low-impact-development projects. Come to Rosa's restaurant in Pismo Beach to hear more about the District's Wetland Enhancement and Wet-Swale projects.

#### LOCATION:

**Rosa's Restaurant**  
491 Price Street  
Pismo Beach, CA



#### DATE & TIME:

Thursday, October 16<sup>th</sup>  
12:00 pm (Noon)

#### MENU:

Food served "family style," including salad, two pasta dishes (chicken and vegetarian), fresh baked bread, and dessert.

#### RESERVATIONS:

Seating is limited to 60 participants. Please sign up by 1:00 pm Friday, October 10th, at the Branch web site ([www.ascelo.org](http://www.ascelo.org)). Please attend the luncheon if you sign-up – some restaurants will charge the Branch for every seat we reserve, regardless of the actual attendance. If you have specific dietary restrictions or have questions, contact Tom Zehnder at (805) 544-4011 or by email at [TomZ@wallacegroup.us](mailto:TomZ@wallacegroup.us). The cost is \$20 for members or guests and \$10 for student members.

### PRESIDENTS PERSPECTIVE:

#### *Who knew chick flicks could be so inspiring?*

It is tradition for the President to submit an article for our branch newsletter every month, but I have to say that's probably not the main reason an engineer would accept the nomination. As a matter of fact, I just sat for about 5 minutes contemplating my next sentence, which turned out to be this one. It's a challenge to be professional, articulate, and insightful yet entertaining 12 times, especially for a person who is used to speaking in numbers and acronyms. So to quote one of my favorite chick flicks, I'll write about "what I know" instead, which will probably be none of those things. What does a 31-year-old civil engineer know that may be interesting to the branch at large? First, I know that Kari Wagner and the other outgoing officers did a fabulous job over the past year (past many years in some cases) implementing new ideas for luncheons and the newsletter, encouraging students to attend meetings and scoping out an infrastructure report card for our area. Nola Engelskirger, Jeff Werst, Jeff van den Eikhof, Erin Westmoreland, and Malcolm McEwen – you will be missed! I know that our returning and new officers are fired up to keep the momentum going, and it promises to be a great year.

Unfortunately, I know it may not be so for many in our country as the economy takes center stage. Yet, while the economy cycles up and down, civil engineers can take pride in being steadily accountable and ethical, with deliverable improvement through time, driven by the need to protect public health and safety, and improve our quality of life, efficiently and effectively. As officers, we hope to support our local professionals in this effort by highlighting exemplary projects, new technologies, professionals and students, and facilitating networking at our monthly luncheons, in our monthly newsletter and during our annual seminar. As members, additional opportunities exist to promote our profession, including being key contacts for legislation activities, participating in K-12 outreach programs, or supporting other programs like Habitat for Humanity, Engineers

Check out the photos taken at recent branch meetings on the SLO Branch website at [www.ASCESLO.org/Gallery](http://www.ASCESLO.org/Gallery)

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## MEET THE MEMBER - DR. RAKESH GOEL

This month, we have an opportunity to meet Dr. Rakesh Goel. Dr. Goel was recently elected to serve as Chair of the Civil and Environmental Engineering Department at Cal Poly. I sat down with Rakesh to discuss a bit about his history, his thoughts on the civil engineering profession, and his goals as Chair for the Department at Cal Poly.

Rakesh grew up in old part of Delhi, India where he attended local public schools. With encouragement from both parents, who had no more than middle-school education but understood the value of higher education, he was fortunate to be accepted to the highly competitive Indian Institute of Technology (IIT), Delhi. After a short stint at engineering consulting company in India, it was off to the University of California (UC) at Berkeley for Rakesh to pursue graduate studies in structural engineering. Rakesh received both a master's and doctoral degree from Berkeley. He remained at the university for 4 years after completion of his degrees as a research engineer, spent three years at Syracuse University, and then moved to Cal Poly.

Dr. Goel teaches courses related to strength of materials, structural analysis, structural dynamics, bridge design, and seismic principles, analysis, and design. He has also been quite active in seismic research and brings this cutting edge technology into his classes. Rakesh has been at Cal Poly for 11 years but said it feels like that he just started yesterday and remarked that "teaching bright young students makes the time fly."

Rakesh has been active in ASCE at the national level. In particular, he has organized sessions and presented papers at the ASCE Structures Congress. Also, he served as an Associate Editor of the ASCE Journal of Structural Engineering. Rakesh holds the distinction of having the ASCE



membership grade Fellow (elected in 2005). Dr. Goel is excited about the profession of Civil engineering and sees great opportunity in the near future due to our need to upgrade this country's infrastructure. His advice to young engineers is elegantly simple: "Just enjoy what you do."

I asked Rakesh what was the favorite project that he ever worked on and he described his involvement in a CalTrans-funded research project on developing simplified procedures for seismic analysis of bridges crossing faults. This challenging problem was approached using state-of-the-art seismological models. The sophisticated approach developed in this project has been analytically validated and is currently being converted into CalTrans guidelines.

Dr. Goel described several important goals for his tenure as the department chair including working towards improving student success, improving time-to-graduation (please take note all you 5th and 6th year seniors!), making sure that the Cal Poly tradition of learn-by-doing is "alive and kicking," and keeping all the faculty on the cutting edge of their field of expertise. Dr. Goel is taking any opportunity (including this meet the member column) to remind local professionals that state funding does not even come close to the level that is needed to meet these important goals. Dr. Goel kindly asks that if you wish to support the department, please contact him at 805-756-2137.

Dr. Goel highlighted the importance of the student clubs at Cal Poly, which play an instrumental role in this area by providing students to work on exciting projects like concrete canoe, steel bridge, concrete bowling ball, geo-challenge, and kitchen sink to drinking water. In his free time, Rakesh likes to go to the Cal Poly recreation center for exercise in the evening. This enables him to de-stress at the end of the day. He notes that more importantly, he occasionally run into our students and gets to talk to them in an informal setting.

~ Jim Hanson

## UPCOMING WEBINAR: ADDRESSING THE WORKFORCE ISSUE

On October 15th, Project Parters invites you to explore the not-too-distant future when experienced engineering and water industry talent maybe scarce in their latest *Lunch & Learn Webinar*; "Addressing the Work Force Issue - Retiring Baby Boomers to Gen X & Y".

Baby Boomers are retiring, and the current public workforce is older than the overall labor pool. When aging baby boomers hit retirement, they take with them years of institutional knowledge. Please join our distinguished guest presenters as they explore topics related to: the ageing workforce and the effects of boomer retirement, the new generation of workers, and other future workforce issues.

**Date:** October 15, 2008      **Time:** 12:00 Noon until 1:00 PM  
**Location:** On-line      **Cost:** \$10 per computer log-in

For additional information or for technical assistance, please contact Doug Johnson at (949) 852-9300 ext. 219.

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## PRESIDENT PERSPECTIVE (CONT.)

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*(Continued from page 1)*

Without Borders, and the student chapter of the Society of Civil Engineers at Cal Poly.

So as the year proceeds, your feedback and ideas on how our branch of ASCE can both support you in your profession, and provide opportunities to become more active in promoting our profession, will be greatly appreciated. And lastly, I know that your feedback and ideas on future president's articles will be the most appreciated of all.

~ Courtney Howard

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### THIRD ANNUAL INFRASTRUCTURE SYMPOSIUM AND ASCE REGION 9 AWARDS DINNER: *Sheraton Grand Sacramento – Sacramento CA*

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*Save the date: February 24, 2009*

The Symposium will feature outstanding speakers from the Governor's office, California legislature and agencies, federal agencies, and several experts.

Infrastructure topics to be featured are water, transportation, bridges, bond measures, sustainability, and much more.

Whether you are in the private or public sector, this all day beneficial event will provide you with new insights, updated information and a great opportunity to network with your fellow ASCE members. It is also a day to highlight and celebrate the best of California's ASCE Civil Engineers, Projects, and more.

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### LA SECTION INSTALLATION & AWARDS DINNER

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Two nominations from the ASCE-SLO Branch received awards at the Los Angeles Section Installation & Awards Dinner on Saturday, October 4 at the Aquarium of the Pacific in Long Beach. The Cambria Grammar School Project won the Outstanding Sustainability Project award, and Dr. Fiegel of Cal Poly State University won Faculty Advisor of the Year. Congratulations to both the project and to Dr. Fiegel!

The awards ceremony was preceded by a behind the scenes "green tour" that provided an education into the daily operations of the aquarium. Those that went on the tour got to enter the "wet side" of the aquarium (a section not normally open to the public) and see what it takes to maintain a world class aquarium, from water filtration to animal care and feeding. Coincidentally, attendees ate fresh lobster for dinner - presumably raised and caught elsewhere.

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Visit the ASCE-SLO Website at:  
[www.ASCESLO.org](http://www.ASCESLO.org)

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## OTHER LOCAL EVENTS

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*If you have an event you would like posted at no cost, contact Syllas Cranor at 781-5260 or at [scrantor@co.slo.ca.us](mailto:scrantor@co.slo.ca.us).*

The local chapter of the **American Public Works Association** meets on the second Wednesday of the month, every other month. For details, contact Jay Walter at [jwalter@slocity.org](mailto:jwalter@slocity.org).

The Central Coast Branch of the **California Land Surveyors Association** usually meets the second Thursday of each month. Contact Rochelle Vierra at 549-3461 or [Rochelle\\_Vierra@dot.ca.gov](mailto:Rochelle_Vierra@dot.ca.gov) for more information.

Cal Poly's **Society of Civil Engineers (SCE)** welcomes local professionals to its regular meetings held alternate Wednesdays at 7:00 pm in Room 13-118. For further information, contact Kari Wagner ([kariw@WallaceGroup.us](mailto:kariw@WallaceGroup.us)) or Jeff Spannbauer ([jeffs@cannonassoc.com](mailto:jeffs@cannonassoc.com)).

The Central Coast Chapter of the **International Code Council** meets the first Thursday of the month at Margie's Dinner. Contact Sylvia Aldana at 781-4671 or [saldana@co.slo.ca.us](mailto:saldana@co.slo.ca.us) for information.

The **American Institute of Architects** meets the 3rd Wednesday of each month at Vista Grande Restaurant (Cal Poly). For information, call Jeff Emrick at 549-8658.

**Engineers Without Borders** meets on the second Wednesday of each month at Noon. For further information, contact an EWB Officer at [ewb.slo@gmail.com](mailto:ewb.slo@gmail.com).

The **Central Coast Geological Society** meets every second Tuesday. For information, contact Lou Blanck at 542-4626.

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### 2008-09 ASCE-SLO BRANCH OFFICERS

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